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A strange but true

NARRATIVE
OF THE
DELUSION
OF THE
DEVIL



At a late

Quakers Meeting,
On one JOHN THURSTON.

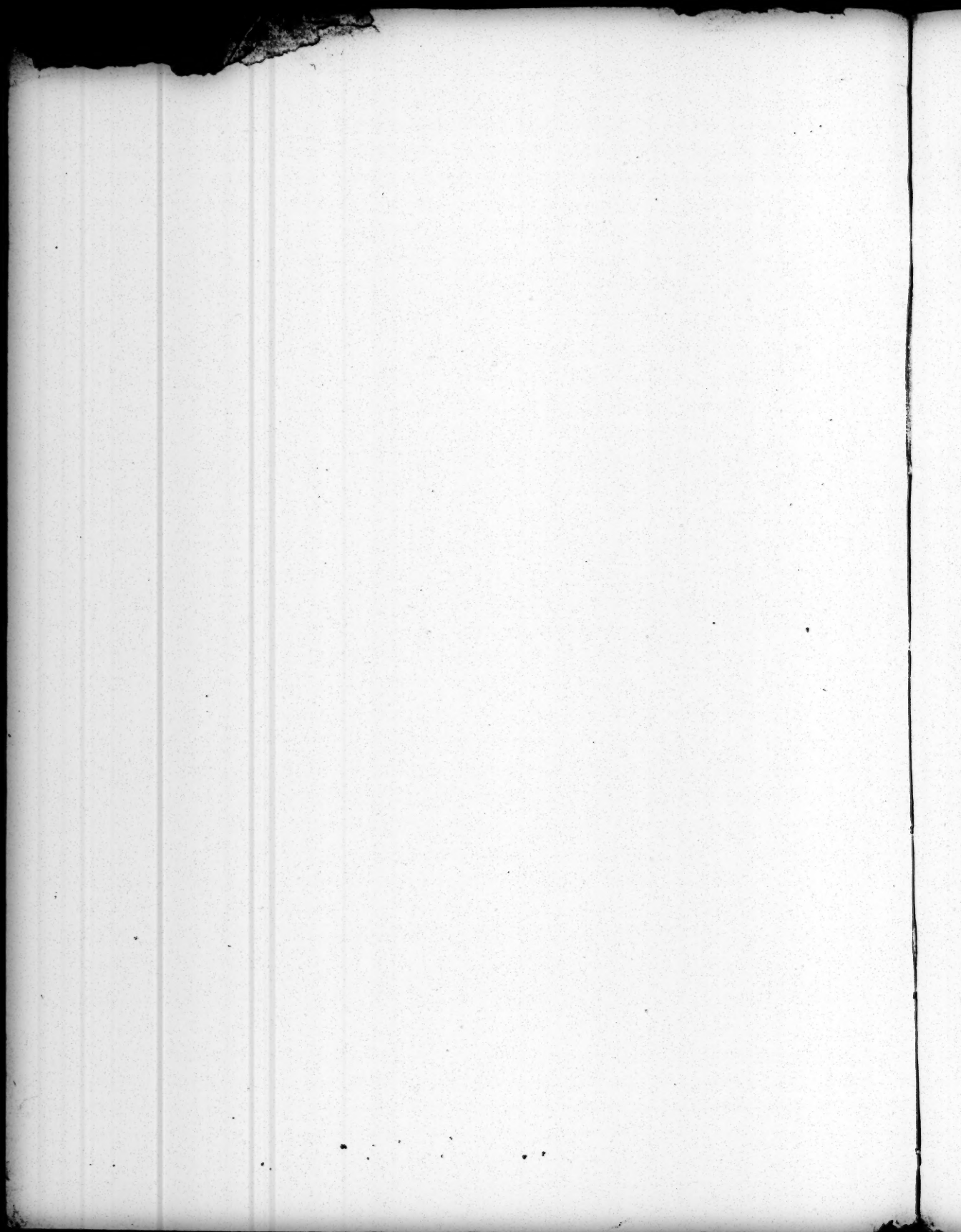
How he was seduced to turn QUAKER, and Possessed by
an Evil Spirit, and of a Temptation he had to Cut his own Throat,
and how he was preserved therefrom; and several Passages which
happen'd to him in the time of his Delusion.

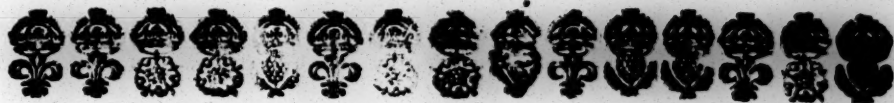
*Attested by Mr. William Robinson, that had the Relation
from his own mouth.*

With Allowance. Ro. L'Estrange.

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A true, strange, and wonderful Narrative of
the Delusion of the Devil at a late *Qua-*
kers Meeting, on one *John Thurston* of
Kendal in *Westmoreland*, &c.

SIR,

TO satisfy your scruple as to the Truth
and Credit of this following Relation,
I had as much as this amounts to from
Thurston himself; and the Minister of
the Parish affirmed the Particulars of it. My
house is in Browns Court in Crutchet-Friers,
London, and my name is William Robinson.

IN May last 1678, at *Kendal* in *Westmoreland*,
one *John Thurston* who was very desirous to
associate himself with the *Quakers* at their
Meetings, and speaking with one of them a-
bout it, he much encouraged him to hold on his
Purpose; and accordingly he went to them,
when their present Speaker whose drift was to
deny all Ministerial Teaching and Ordinances,
together with all notional knowledge gained
by the use of such means, and to become as if
they never learned any thing; and now to be
taught

taught of God within themselves, by waiting upon an inward Light, which (as he said) lies low hidden under the Earth, viz. the Old man which is of the Earth, earthly.

Thurston was immediately so taken with this kind of Doctrine, that he resolved to close with them; was afraid to read any good Books, to hear any Preaching-Minister, or to call to remembrance any thing which he had formerly learned concerning God, Christ, his own Estate, or any other subject contained in the Scripture. One of them told him, that Christ was as man, had his failings, distrusted God; and many other blasphemous words.

At his next meeting, the Speaker urged him to take up the Cross daily, saying, *Carry the Cross all day, and it will keep thee at night*. He urged him to hearken to a Voice within him; spoke much of a Light within them. Which *Thurston* not yet finding, was much troubled, desiring that he might fall into quaking, thinking thereby he should attain to the immediate discoveries of God to him. And accordingly shortly after as he was walking in his Chamber, he began to quake so extreemly, that he could not stand, but fell upon his bed, where he howled and cried in a terrible manner, yet was he not afraid, but look'd upon it as the pangs of the New birth. After half an hour, by degrees, he ceased from howling, and rejoiced that now he could witness against the Ministers of *England*, as false Prophets and Priests of *Baal*.

All

All the Night after, he was much troubled with Dreams about his Sins, and when he awaked, he perceived something lighting on his Neck, and giving him a great stroak which caused much pain, and so a second, third, and fourth, each less then other, descending till it came to the middle of his Back, and then he discerned something to enter into his Body, and he thought he heard a Voice within him saying, *It is day*, adding twice, *As sure as it's light, so surely shall Christ give thee light.*

Two or three days after, he still waited for more Light, and walking into a field, he lay down with his Face to the Earth, at which time his right hand began extreamly to shake, and he was in a great rapture of joy, then did the power within, raise him and set him on his Feet, and afterwards layd him on his Back, brought his Sins into his remembrance, causing his Hand at every Sin, to strike the ground, and he heard a voyce saying, *Now is such a Sin mortified*; then was he perswaded that all his Sins were mortified at once: Then rose he up, and a voice asked him, *What he would from Heaven*, and it should be given him, then said *Thurston*, what shall I ask? It was answered, *Ask Wisdom in the first place*, he did so, it was answered, *That his request was granted, and that he should be endowed with the gift of Prophecy.*

Presently after, he went to another of their Meetings, where the same person was again the Speaker, with which he was more affected than formerly,

formerly , for that as he conceited , he could inwardly witness to what he spake ; after him another spake, in the time of whose speaking, *Thurston* was drawn out of his Chair, and thrown upon the ground , where he lay all night, all which time, his Body and Members were all in a kind of Epileptical motion; being turned from his back on his belly , and so back again several times , making crosses with his Legs and his Hands , moving on the ground as if he had been writing , and he heard a voice saying, *That that writing with his hand on the ground , signified the writing of the Law in his heart* , then were his hands moved to his head , and he said that he heard a voyce, *Christ in thee* , which words he was compelled to sing forth in a strange manner , and with such a voice as was not his own; then it seemed that some Spirit raised him up, and bid him be humble , then brought him on his knees again , and he heard the voyce saying, *Stoop low, low*, and when his face was almost at the ground , it said to him, *Take up thy Cross, and follow me*, then rising, he was led out of the house by the Devil at a Back door to the River, and back again, and then into the Town, where he was drawn down the street to a door, but he knew not where; whereupon two of them that followed him said , *Whither will you go? This is the Fidlers house*; *Thurston* answered, be it whose house it will, I am led hither, and hither I must go , then was his hand forced to knock at the door, and the Voice bad him

him say, *Behold, Christ stands at the door and knocks.* The Fidler opening the door, he went in, and taking down a Fiddle, he was forced to play on it and to dance; whereupon he questioned what powerled him to such actions: and the Voice presently answered him, *This is not because I love Musick for I hate it, but to signifie to thee what joy there is in Heaven at thy Conversion; as also what Spiritual Melody thou shalt have hereafter*

Then was he led out of the house and carried through the Town, pronouncing a Text of Scripture as he went. Then went he to his own house, and there by the Spirit was thrown down, and forced to make Circles with his hands, the Voice telling him, *That he was now putting off the Old man.* His hand also was forced to take up a stone which lay on the floor, which he thought to be like a mans heart, and the Voice told him, *That Christ had taken that stone out of his heart, and given him an heart of flesh.* Then was he cast upon his back to the ground, and the Voice said, *Thou shalt have many Angels to keep thee:* And immediately two Swallows came down the Chimney; whereupon he cried out, *My Angels, my Angels!* And withal he held out his hand to them, expecting they should have come to him; but they flew up the chimney again, though the door and windows were open. Then was he carried upon his hands and knees out of the doors into the street; and when his Wife would have stopt him, he said, *He must not be stopt, he must forsake Wife, Children and all, to follow Christ.* Thus went he up the street, thinking he bore a Cross upon his neck, till some pull'd him out of the mire and dirt, and by force carried him into his own house; whereupon pointing at one of them, he said, *Christ points at thee; thou art a wicked woman, thou hast hindred the work of the Lord.* Thus he continued until the evening, when many of the Quakers coming to him, said, *Be lowly minded, and bearken*

bearken to the Voice within thee. And so they left him, his strength being almost quite spent with his restlessness.

His Wife and Family going to Bed, he remained alone, when he began to question, whether these strange Actions were *Divine*, or *Diabolical*: Whereupon he trembled, and his Hand was forced to take up a Knife, which lay by, and to point it to his Throat; and the Voice said to him, *Open a hole there, and thou shalt have Eternal Life.* But he threw away the Knife, and his Wife coming to him, at her persuasion he went to bed; and all the Night after he assured himself, that he was possessed by an Evil Spirit. And in the Morning he roared and cryed out, *Now the Devil is gone out of me*; at which instant he and his Family heard it thunder, though no others heard it; Hereupon he fell into Despair for a time, thinking that every thing which he either heard or saw, was the Devil which came to fetch him away. Sometimes he thought that he should be taken away in a flame of Fire, other sometimes that the Earth would open and swallow him. Yet at last it pleased God (as it seems) to give him Repentance and Peace in his Conscience; and did desire that a Narratiue of these things might be Published, to discover the danger of the *Quakers* Meetings, and to be a Caution to others, to take heed how they go out of Gods ways, and forsake his Ordinances, lest falling into the Error of the wicked, they decline from their former steadfastness; and least not receiving the Love of the Truth, that they might be saved, God give them over to strong Delusions, to believe a Lye.

FINIS.

